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ABSTRACT

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits (COP) is a volunteer-based nonprofit organization in Ohio that has offered outdoor educational and recreational opportunities to its members for 63 years. COP day and trip programs focus on outdoor activities such as bicycling, kayaking, hiking, and rock climbing. In addition, COP offers classes in the skills required for such activities and training for trip leaders. During the 12-month period ended July 1999, COP offered 721 day trips, 67 weekend trips, and 15 longer trips or programs for a total of 41,738 trip-participant-days. This paper describes the structure and administration of the organization, as well as some of its major events. Sections on the organization and its administration cover the mission statement, members and their responsibilities, requirements for being a trip leader, leader responsibilities, leadership training and organizational support for leaders, the role of volunteer "activity chairs" who administer individual activities or projects and recruit trip leaders, the duties of the executive board and its officers, duties of four paid employees, how the bills are paid, the monthly newsletter, and the recruitment and training of volunteer successors. Classes are listed, and major events are briefly described. Appendices present the organizational structure and some of COP's operating guidelines and policies, including details on risk management. (SV)

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Columbus Outdoor Pursuits:

A Model Structure for Volunteer Based Outdoor Pursuits Programs

Ann E. Gerckens

14th Annual International Conference on Outdoor Recreation & Education

ICORE 2000 Conference Proceedings
Miami University
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COLUMBUS OUTDOOR PURSUITS: A MODEL STRUCTURE FOR VOLUNTEER BASED OUTDOOR PURSUITS PROGRAMS

Ann E. Gerckens

ABSTRACT: A brief look at the structure of a successful volunteer based outdoor pursuits programs including the responsibilities of participants, trip leaders, Activity Chairs, Executive Board and Officers. A few of the organization operating guidelines are included as an appendix.

While the nature of volunteer based organizations naturally leans towards chaos, some structure is necessary in order to ensure that programs occur, bills get paid, and to empower volunteers and facilitate success. The following structure is that of Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, a central Ohio organization with 63 years of volunteer experience.

Mission Statement:

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits (COP) is a 501(c)(3) organization formed to help all people gain a greater understanding of the world by providing educational and recreational opportunities while living and traveling simply in the spirit of friendship.

Members

Most of our three thousand members reside in the Central Ohio area. We do have members living further away, particularly those interested in the boating and backpacking activities. Two hundred members live out of state. Most of these are former "Columbusites" who like to keep in touch with COP. A few joined to take advantage of the membership discount on longer trips. Some want to continue their support, or come to Columbus often enough that membership is worthwhile to them.

COP members are responsible for electing the Board and choosing whether or not to participate in trips, or volunteer. As trip participants, we expect that members will behave in a safe, courteous manner and do their best to contribute to the group's physical and emotional welfare. Participants are expected to accept responsibility for their safety and whereabouts. They are also expected to sign the liability release and to follow COP safety policies.

Trip Leaders

COP trip leaders have many responsibilities. Prior to the trip they are responsible for the trips logistic and safety plans and are expected to plan the use of available vehicles to ensure efficiency in terms of mileage, capacity and safety. Leaders are expected to screen potential participants for possible health and safety issues including ill health and skills inadequate to the level of the trip.

On the trip, trip leaders are responsible for the physical and emotional well being of the group and for carrying out the safety policies of that activity. They are expected to educate participants whose skills or interpersonal interactions are not up to par. All leaders are required to have first aid and rescue skills appropriate to the activity, or to make sure someone with those skills is on the trip.

Bureaucracy intrudes. Trip leaders are required to obtain the Activity Chair's endorsement for the trip in advance. They are also responsible for filing a newsletter schedule item before the deadline for the issue in which they want the trip to be listed. For events that will run through the COP books, they also need to file a budget request. At the start of the trip, leaders are expected to obtain releases and emergency numbers, plus rental equipment and non-member fees. Should an incident occur during the trip, they are expected to handle the problem and ensure the safety of the group, and to document the situation with an incident report. After the trip, the leader follows up on incidents, notifies the COP Risk Manager and files a report. Trip reports must be returned to the office and any collected fees deposited within one month of the end of the trip.

There are a few requirements for being a COP leader, including that the person:

Be a member of COP
Support the mission of COP
Read the Activity Leader Manual
Have the appropriate skill level for the activity or provide someone who does
Have a signed Liability Release from each tripper
Be trained in first aid to the degree appropriate to the activity or have someone on the trip that is trained.
Use the Incident Report Form when needed
Has attended Leadership Training (if the trip is more than 4 days), unless exempted by the Board (Trip Leadership Manual p. 2).

With all these responsibilities come a few rights. A trip leader has the right to be treated with respect by the trip participants, other trip leaders, COP members and the Board. A trip leader also has the right to exclude a person if the leader feels that, from past experience, that person would constitute a safety hazard or would diminish enjoyment of the trip. The leader should inform the rejected person of the reason for the rejection, thereby allowing that person the opportunity to fix their problem.

Support

COP holds Leadership Training classes at least once a year. These classes are actually more about trip administration than actual leadership, but they do give trip leaders the information they need to obtain permission to run a COP trip, publicize that trip in the newsletter, plan a safe, fun trip, and manage the risks of trip leadership. All Activity Chairs are authorized to give a one-on-one Leadership Training to prospective leaders if needed. A COP Trip Leadership Manual is provided to all leaders. This manual includes a list of requirements for trip leading, plus suggestions. The Activity Safety policies are

laid out here, as is the COP Risk Management plan. Liability waivers, incident reports and incident follow up forms are included so the leader can photocopy as needed. Information about paperwork and a list of income/expense account numbers is also included. Activity Chairs and experienced leaders are willing to help out new leaders with logistics, planning and advice about actual leadership issues.

COP tries to recruit volunteers to provide training in first aid and rescue. Several members are certified Red Cross Instructors and provide basic first aid and CPR training to members at cost. COP policy is to subsidize training costs for volunteers willing to become instructors. This policy extends to volunteers taking river rescue, rock rescue and other special skills. For many activities, basic first aid is not adequate. Wilderness First Aid has been offered the past seven years. This program was expanded to Advanced Wilderness First Aid in 2000, and will include a weekend series for Wilderness First Responder in 2001.

Free Rein

Within this structure, trip leaders have freedom to choose what kind of trip they want to lead. With some limitations (the insurance company would break out in hives if a COP trip went to climb Everest, and won't cover hang gliding or skydiving) trip leaders are free to go where they want to go, do what they want to do. Want to go rafting on the Nolichucky during your backpack trip? Have a qualified rafting trip leader on the trip, or hire a reliable outfitter. Want to learn to use an ice ax while you are in Oregon? Hire instructors. Just don't forget to check their credentials. Think we need wilderness first aid skills but there isn't a local instructor? Hire SOLO and fly them in. As long as trip leaders are thinking of the risks and making plans accordingly they could do just about any outdoor activity.

Activity Chairs

Trip leaders are organized by, and report to the Activity Chair. These volunteers have full responsibility for the administration of the respective activity or project. They provide program administration in compliance with both COP Executive Board and Program Safety and Procedural Policies. They are the voice of their activities at the Board level, participating as voting members of the Board. Activity Chairs are recommended by members, participating in the activity, to the Board for appointment to the position.

Recruitment of trip leaders usually falls to the Activity Chairs who also approve trip leaders for all trips in their Programs. They are responsible for overseeing the maintenance of first aid certification and rescue skills among the Program leadership contingent. They also are responsible for ensuring that the activity has competent leaders, safety instruction at outings, adequate schools and an activity program that will accommodate the number of members wishing to take part. They spend a lot of time on the phone!

The everyday operation of their activity and the submission of budgets are under the direct control of the Activity Chair. The Treasurer and Bookkeeper are not supposed to

issue funds for the activity without a pay order signed by the Activity Chair. As part of their fiscal duties, they oversee the purchase, maintenance, storage, repair and replacement of the Programs equipment. For some programs, like Bicycling, this doesn't amount to much. The Boating Program, on the other hand, owns so much equipment that it is necessary to recruit a volunteer just to handle the equipment.

The monthly membership meeting assigned to an activity is conducted by that Activity's Chair, including publicity about the meeting. This person also is expected to organize an annual planning meeting with current and potential leaders to map out their program plans for the year.

The Board

Activity Chairs are members of the Executive Board (The Board), which also includes sixteen elected members. The Board meets the first Thursday night of the month, December through October. In November, they spend the entire first weekend at a retreat

On a monthly basis, The Board approves leaders of extended trips, and approves and monitors the finances of the organization. The buck stops here on fiduciary responsibility.

On an "as needed basis", The Board approves the fees and policies for all COP activities and programs, approves activity safety policies and sets the dates and subjects of the monthly activity meetings. It also establishes, approves, implements and periodically reviews policies.

Officers

COP does not have an Executive Director. The Board President is the Chief Executive Officer and directs the organization's affairs. This volunteer is responsible for appointing committees, making assignments to board members, supervising COP employees and reporting to the board all interim actions between Board meetings. The President is also the official spokesperson to the public, though that task is usually delegated to the Activity Chair of the activity in question.

The **Vice President** assists the President and presides over meetings when the President is absent. If the President vacates that position mid-term, the Vice President becomes the President. COP has found that it is very important for the Vice President to have the skills necessary to be President.

The **Treasurer** is the custodian of the organization's funds and is responsible for keeping accurate records of all sources and expenditures, and for investing the funds in a fiscally conservative manner. One of the challenges for the Treasurer is explaining the monthly income/expense statements and balance sheets to the board. COP has found it necessary to have several people authorized to sign checks. The Treasurer, President, Vice President, Secretary and Director of the Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure are all authorized. It is preferred that the person signing the check not be the person who signed the pay order, but there are times when only one signer is available and circumstances do not

allow for a delay. Any check of $2000 or more needs two signatures. Occasionally, a check needs to wait because there are not two authorized signers in town!

The **Secretary** prepares and keeps the minutes and corporate records of the organization. This volunteer is also responsible for keeping an up to date contact list of Board members

Another important position on the board is the Risk Manager. This person is responsible for coordinating and unifying safety policies and procedures, collecting incident reports and acts as liaison with the insurance carriers. Many of our leaders are resistant to the idea of risk management, so this is a position that requires tact and persistence.

Employees

While Columbus Outdoor Pursuits is a volunteer based organization, two full-time and two part-time employees have been hired to facilitate running the organization.

The **Office Manager** keeps an eye on the day to day operation of the organization and provides support/advice/nagging as needed to the Board and trip leaders. The person in this position also supervises office volunteers and the GOBA data entry operator, processes mail, phone calls, memberships, and gives clerical support to the President and Executive Board.

The Director of the Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure (GOBA) is responsible for the running of an 8-day, 3000 participant bike tour. Since GOBA visits a different part of the state each year, a great deal of the Director's time is spent rounding up towns and local volunteers to host the tour. The rest of the time is devoted to the organization of volunteers and tour administration.

With 3,000 people to register and send confirmation letters to, GOBA uses a part-time data entry clerk January through June. This is on an as-needed basis.

A part-time bookkeeper writes checks, keeps the general ledger and balances the checkbook.

Paying the bills

Most trips run off the books as a strictly splitting-the-costs deal. Trip leaders may get their costs covered, but may not make money by leading the trip.

All COP programs are run by volunteers except The Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure. Most participants pay only the costs of the trip. Non-members are charged $2 per day toward liability insurance and overhead costs. Special events and schools are priced to raise money to cover programs. Every effort is made to keep these schools and events affordable while still raising funds for the organization.

COP expects each activity to pay its own costs. In addition, each is asked to budget its income and expenses so as to make at least $2 per person per day towards the overhead costs of the organization. Generally, each school or big event is planned so it will make money towards the support of the particular activity and the organization in general.

Communications

COP publishes Columbus Outdoors, a monthly newsletter that is sent to all members. Additional issues are sent to bike shops, outdoor stores, libraries, high schools and interested parties such as the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and local city parks and recreation departments. This 16-page publication includes contact information for each activity and the Board, membership information, a schedule of activities, plus event registration forms, stories and photos. Since this is a volunteer organization, the number and variety of trips changes month-to-month, depending on who volunteered to lead a trip.

The editor works from home to collect, organize and lay out the issue. The official deadline for items is the first of the month, the month prior to publication; i.e. the deadline for the November issue is October 1. The editor takes the disk to the printer, around the 20th of the month with a target mailing date of the 25th. The Office Manager creates a mailing disk and takes it to the mailing house around the 22nd, depending on the printing status.

Succession

Volunteers are expected to recruit and train their successors. In reality, they rarely do, disappearing with all the knowledge of how that particular event was run. After many years of constantly reinventing the wheel, COP has started to ask each volunteer to keep records, directions, and instructions for their successor, with a copy going to the Activity leader or the COP office. As part of their employment, the Office Manager and GOBA Director keep detailed notebooks on how to do their jobs. Each new Board member is issued a Board Notebook, a compendium of information about the organization including the constitution, operating guidelines, financial information, paperwork checklist, and a brief history. The President is responsible for ensuring that this book is updated annually. It is hoped that this process will make it easier to recruit volunteers and decrease the amount of frustration they experience as they learn the COP ropes.

Programs

The Columbus Outdoor Pursuits trip program includes: bicycling, flat and white water boating, caving, backpacking, hiking, rock climbing and cross country skiing. In addition to these activities, COP maintains 8 cross-state bicycle routes and sells the maps at a nominal price. The backpacking and hiking program maintains a 12-mile section of The Buckeye Trail. This section of treadway also carries the North Country National Scenic Trail and The American Discovery Trail.

During the 12-month period from August 1998 through July 1999,COP offered 721 day trips, 67 weekend trips and 15 trips/programs of longer than a weekend. In addition, the organization held monthly program meetings and activity planning meetings. COP had 41,738 trip participant days during this period.

Schools

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits offers the following schools/classes.

- Leadership Training
- Wilderness First Aid
- Wilderness First Responder
- Red Cross Standard First Aid
- Canoe I (twice a year)
- Canoe II (River School)
- Intermediate Canoe & Kayak School
- Kayak I(spring & fall)
- Kayak II(spring & fall)
- Closed Boat Roll Sessions (weekly June-August, Jan-March)
- Raft School (occasional)
- River Rescue (occasional)
- Beginning Backpack School (spring)
- Hiking school (fall)
- Compass Class (spring)
- Map Reading Class (fall)
- Beginners Caving
- Kids Climb (monthly)
- Rock climbing orientation (monthly)
- Bicycle Maintenance (winter)
- Bicycle Safety Program (middle schools Sept-May)
- GOBA includes safety cycle program, and interpretive programming

- Informal instruction on all trips

New in 2000 were an Introduction to River Crossing and Canyon Travel and also a Snow Travel class for Backpackers.

Major Events

Tour of the Scioto River Valley (TOSRV) is the longest running, largest two-day bicycle event in the country. Cyclists ride 210 miles from Columbus to Portsmouth, Ohio and back every Mother's Day Weekend.

The goals of this event are to provide a personal challenge that emphasizes safety and stamina; provide a ride accessible to people of all ages and abilities who may take part by constraining prices and providing route options of various lengths;

maintain tradition for riders and volunteers; maintain TOSRV as a high value event; and to help support the operating expenses of COP with its revenues and earnings except when this is in irreconcilable conflict with the 1st two goals. (Operating Guidelines p. 8-1)

Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure (GOBA) is a weeklong loop tour in Ohio. Three thousand cyclists explore small communities in the state. Started in 1989, The GOBA mission is to organize a yearly one-week bicycle vacation, in order to inspire independence and nurture personal growth; learn about Ohio, its people, geography and history; provide inter-generational recreation; enhance the image of bicycling in Ohio; raise funds for bicycle-related projects in Ohio. (Operating Guidelines p.8-1)

Across Ohio Bicycle Adventure (XOBA) is a weeklong cycle tour from one side of Ohio to the other. Like GOBA, it uses a different route each year. A one hundred fifty participant limit makes this a much more intimate group than GOBA. Participants are expected to be independent, experienced cyclists because there is much less support for this tour than GOBA and the route is longer.

Patch Rides are full-service day rides in the central Ohio area, generally used as training rides for the larger, more difficult tours. Two snack stops, a lunch stop, mechanical and sag support are the norm for these tours. Currently, COP runs four of these, plus the Columbus Fall Challenge, which is a long, extremely hilly two-day tour.

Budget Tours offer cyclists minimal services for a minimal price. $2 for members, $4 for non-members buys cyclists arrows on the route, maps and a place to park their car. They are on their own for food, water and any sag service they might need. COP runs seven of these a year.

Contributions to the Community:

As a 501©(3) organization, Columbus Outdoor Pursuits gives back to the community. In fact, all profits from the Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure go to our Bicycle Project Development Fund, which is used to fund tangible projects that promote bicycling in Ohio. Some recipients of COP funds have been the Ohio to Erie Trail (Further Trail Mission) Family Medicine (Support Study of cyclists), The Ohio Bicycle Federation (General Fund) The cities of Gahanna, Columbus, Pickerington, Ohio State University (Bicycles for Police) American Red Cross (First Aid Training) and the Central Ohio Amateur Radio Emergency Service (Purchase Repeater).

Running a volunteer based organization requires many volunteers willing to donate a significant amount of time and effort to good of the group. The responsibility shouldered by Trip Leaders and Activity Chairs is not to be taken lightly. As with all groups, the trick is to provide enough structure and support without tangling the volunteers in red tape. Given free rein to take initiative and enough guidance to manage risk and handle paperwork, many members will step forward to lend a hand.

"You can ride your bike without an organization, but without the organization to provide the structure, there is no ride (organized tour)". – Julia Schmitt, COP volunteer (2000, September)

References

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits (1999). Operating Guidelines. Board Notebook (p. 8-1,15-1). Columbus Ohio: COP

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits (2000, February). Trip Leadership Manual (p.2). Columbus, Ohio: COP

Biographical Sketch:

Ann Gerckins, B.F.A., discovered her self-fulfillment in outdoor pursuits. Her outdoor education came through Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, SOLO and workshops at the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association (she has completed the A.T.), and the Wilderness Risk Managers Conference. A COP member for 27 years, and leader for 20 years, Ann teaches backpacking, leadership, and helped write the COP's Trip Leadership Manual. She introduced COP to Wilderness First Aid and arranged WFA courses through SOLO for 6 years.

For further information, contact:

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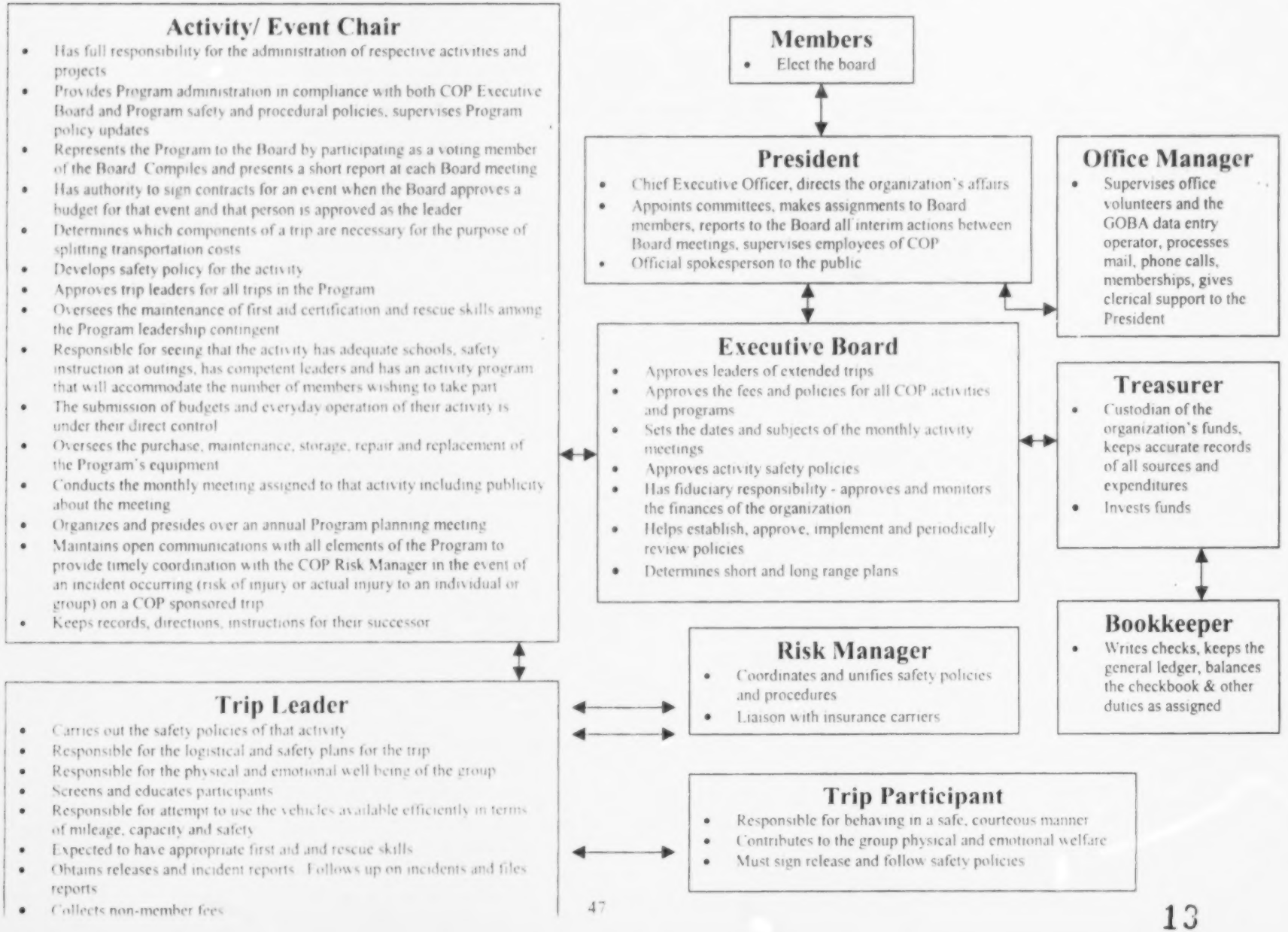
Appendix A

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits Organizational Structure at a Glance (Board Notebook p.15-1)


Activity/ Event Chair
Has full responsibility for the administration of respective activities and projects
Provides Program administration in compliance with both COP Executive Board and Program safety and procedural policies, supervises Program policy updates
Represents the Program to the Board by participating as a voting member of the Board. Compiles and presents a short report at each Board meeting
Has authority to sign contracts for an event when the Board approves a budget for that event and that person is approved as the leader
Determines which components of a trip are necessary for the purpose of splitting transportation costs
Develops safety policy for the activity
Approves trip leaders for all trips in the Program
Oversees the maintenance of first aid certification and rescue skills among the Program leadership contingent
Responsible for seeing that the activity has adequate schools, safety instruction at outings, has competent leaders and has an activity program that will accommodate the number of members wishing to take part
The submission of budgets and everyday operation of their activity is under their direct control
Oversees the purchase, maintenance, storage, repair and replacement of the Program's equipment
Conducts the monthly meeting assigned to that activity including publicity about the meeting
Organizes and presides over an annual Program planning meeting
Maintains open communications with all elements of the Program to provide timely coordination with the COP Risk Manager in the event of an incident occurring (risk of injury or actual injury to an individual or group) on a COP sponsored trip
Keeps records, directions, instructions for their successor
Members
Elect the board
President
Chief Executive Officer, directs the organization's affairs
Appoints committees, makes assignments to Board members, reports to the Board all interim actions between Board meetings, supervises employees of COP
Official spokesperson to the public
Office Manager
Supervises office volunteers and the GOBA data entry operator, processes mail, phone calls, memberships, gives clerical support to the President
Executive Board
Approves leaders of extended trips
Approves the fees and policies for all COP activities and programs
Sets the dates and subjects of the monthly activity meetings
Approves activity safety policies
Has fiduciary responsibility - approves and monitors the finances of the organization
Helps establish, approve, implement and periodically review policies
Determines short and long range plans
Treasurer
Custodian of the organization's funds, keeps accurate records of all sources and expenditures
Invests funds
Bookkeeper
Writes checks, keeps the general ledger, balances the checkbook & other duties as assigned
Risk Manager
Coordinates and unifies safety policies and procedures
Liaison with insurance carriers
Trip Leader
Carries out the safety policies of that activity
Responsible for the logistical and safety plans for the trip
Responsible for the physical and emotional well being of the group
Screens and educates participants
Responsible for attempt to use the vehicles available efficiently in terms of mileage, capacity and safety
Expected to have appropriate first aid and rescue skills
Obtains releases and incident reports. Follows up on incidents and files reports
Collects non-member fees
Trip Participant
Responsible for behaving in a safe, courteous manner
Contributes to the group physical and emotional welfare
Must sign release and follow safety policies

Appendix B:

Some of COPs Operating Guidelines (Board Notebook. p.8-1 to 8-14)

The Columbus Outdoor Pursuits Executive Board consists of sixteen (16) elected positions plus not more than 16 ex-officio positions.

Voluntary ex-officio positions on the board reflect the quantity of ongoing activities and functions represented or supported. Service term is subject to individual discretion. Current positions are the Activity Chairs of: Backpacking, Bicycling, Boating, Hiking, Rock Climbing, Winter Activities; The Function Chairs of Risk Manager, Publicity, and Editor of the newsletter; and the Event Chair, Director of TOSRV.

Ongoing **Committees and Task Forces** include:

- Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Finance
- GOBA Advisory
- Insurance
- Newsletter
- Personnel
- Publicity
- Insurance/Risk Management

Temporary Committees include:

- Nominations - The President shall nominate and the Board shall approve a Nominating Committee in July.
- Audit- The President shall nominate and the Board shall approve an Audit Committee in October

The regular meetings of the Executive Board shall be held at 7:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month except November. The November meeting shall be a weekend conference meeting. Quorum is 10 members present in person. All COP members are to be encouraged to attend Board meetings

Policies

The Executive Board sets policy for Columbus Outdoor Pursuits. The Operating Guidelines are a compendium of the policy decisions made by the Board in the orderly administration of the organization. The Board may amend this document by majority vote.

Judgment-Impairing Substances

No one shall participate in Columbus Outdoor Pursuits activities while under the influence of judgment-impairing -substances as defined by law. The inappropriate, improper, or illegal use of alcohol or drugs will not be tolerated.
No judgment impairing substances shall be consumed by operators of transportation conveyance devices during Columbus Outdoor Pursuits activities.

No one shall be permitted to use property/equipment owned or controlled by Columbus Outdoor Pursuits while under the influence of judgment impairing substances.

All participants must be in compliance with local and state laws.

Americans With Disabilities Act

COP will make a good, faithful effort to comply with both the letter and intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act in all areas of our organization including but not limited to employment, facilities, meetings and activities. COP will make reasonable efforts to accommodate needs of people with disabilities if notified in advance.

Youth Participation

A major aim of COP is outdoor education for people of all ages. This commitment includes a dedication to youths in COP events. However, in dealing with youths certain guidelines apply:

- Anyone ages 18 or older is an adult who may participate on his or her own volition.
- Anyone under 18 is a minor who may participate in only one of two ways:
  - The youth's parent or legal guardian accompanies the minor on the event and is responsible for the minor;
  - The person has written permission and liability release from his or her parent or legal guardian to participate. In this latter case, the trip leader may designate a responsible adult participant to assist and monitor the youth or youth involved.
- COP sets no age limits on youth participation. The trip leader determines whether the youth is mature enough for the event and is physically capable of meeting the exertions involved. The trip leader should also determine whether the particular event will be safe for the individual youth and whether the youth's participation would be commensurate with the trip goals for the group. Signed liability releases for all youths must be kept on file.

Documentation

- **Minutes** are kept by the Board Secretary at home.
- **Financial records** are kept by the Treasurer at the COP office.
- **Membership records** including a Membership list are kept at the office by the Office Manager.
- **Board Phone list** is updated periodically and distributed by the Board Secretary.

- **Trip reports** are sent by trip leaders to the office. These are picked up quarterly by Activity Leaders before writing their Excess Medical Insurance Reports. They are kept at the home of a designated member of the Insurance/Risk Management Committee. Lawyers have advised COP to keep releases for 20 years (long enough for a child to turn 18 and have a 2 year statute of limitations).
- A **phone book** of Columbus Outdoor Pursuits members shall be produced once a year. The Columbus Outdoor Pursuits Membership list is closed; it is not available for use outside of the organization.

Manuals

- Activity Leaders Manual is maintained by the Insurance/Risk Management Committee.
- Board Notebook is maintained by the President.
- Office Managers Handbook is maintained by the Office Manager.
- How To GOBA is maintained by the GOBA Director.
- Employee Handbook is maintained by the President.
- An Annual Report is produced in early October by the Office Manager.

Expenditures

- Members of the Board have budgetary authority for their activities.
- Expenditure of Columbus Outdoor Pursuits funds shall only be made upon presentation to the Treasurer (or designated agent) of a properly signed pay order.
- Expenditure of unbudgeted Columbus Outdoor Pursuits funds shall only be made in the following cases:

  An activity or overhead budget overrun of 10% may be approved by a Board member but the board must be advised of it at the next regular meeting of the Board.

  An expenditure of greater than $500.00 must be approved by the Board and the motion to approve that expenditure must be distributed to the Board a minimum of 72 hours before the meeting at which the motion is to be considered.
- Activity Chairs each have the authority to sign contracts for an event when the Executive Board approves a budget for that event and that person is approved as the leader.

Fees

- Children age six and under shall not be charged an equipment rental fee in Columbus Outdoor Pursuits activities; children between the ages of seven and twelve, inclusive, shall be charged half price.
- The non-member fee for participation in Columbus Outdoor Pursuits activities shall be $2.00 per day.
- Activity/Function specific fees are determined by either the Activity Chair and/or Board and are subject to change by appropriate procedures.

Costs

- The cost of transportation of a trip shall include the costs for gas, parking and tolls in transporting all necessary components of that trip. It shall be left to the discretion of each Activity Chair to determine which components of a trip are necessary
- The transportation cost shall be defined as the total cost of transportation of the trip, as defined above, divided by the number of people on the trip other than the person(s) providing the vehicle(s).
- Leaders of standard and extended trips shall be paid a fee not exceeding the actual leader costs. If there are no more than ten trippers, not counting the trip leader, each tripper shall be assessed ten percent of the leader costs. If there are more than ten tripper the leaders costs may be pro-rated among all the trippers of the full ten percent fee may be charged each tripper provided the additional money is used to pay assistant leaders. All trippers including trip leaders must pay trip fees and equipment rental.
- Leaders' costs shall be defined as the costs that the leader of a trip would incur for meals, transportation, over-nights, and miscellaneous costs (including the cost of admissions, phone calls, maps, and necessary administrative expenses).
- Trip costs are determined by the trip leader, except for special event fees, which are determined by the Board.

Refund Policy

- The trip leader must announce, at the time a trip is listed, the refund policy on deposits if deposits are required. The trip leader must establish a date beyond which deposits are non-refundable.

Donations and Funding

- The life member fund shall maintain a balance of $20,000, the income of which shall be used to defray costs associated with membership services provided to Columbus Outdoor Pursuits life members.

Bicycling Project Development Fund

- The Bicycling Project Development Fund is set aside to create an endowment to fund projects related to bicycling as defined as programs and projects to benefit bicycling, to include, but not be limited to:
  - -Creation and repair of bicycle ways, engineering studies, plans, and right-of-way purchases
  - - Bicycle education
  - - Any other purpose within the scope of the constitution of Columbus Outdoor Pursuits.
- The Fund shall be invested as the Treasurer sees fit and may be co-mingled with other COP funds. It shall be invested in a prudent manner and the income derived from that investment shall inure to the Fund in a manner to be determined by the Treasurer

and approved by the Board. The Fund shall be endowed annually by the Board at the August meeting, upon review and agreement concerning the fair amount of excess funds generated by The Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure in that year.

- The Bicycling Project Development Fund of Columbus Outdoor Pursuits accepts applications for projects based on the criteria listed below. Grants are awarded based on merit and quality of applications. COP accepts applications annually between August 15 and September 15. Applications are reviewed during September and the Board considers proposals at its October Board meeting. Applicants will be notified by November 1.
- Eligibility is limited to government agencies or organizations with a tax-exempt status [501 (c)(3)].
- Proposals must be for capital improvements (e.g. bike paths, bike lanes, bike routes, secure and weather-protected bike parking facilities) or bicycling education (e.g. sponsoring seminars, brochures).
- Projects must secure matching funds of at least 50%. The match can be any combination of local, state or federal funds or donations from individuals, corporations or foundations. Generally they will be cash, but in-kind services may be acceptable in certain circumstances
- In recognition of the source of these funds, proposals promoting and supporting the use of bicycles for long-distance travel and commuting are favored
- Funds are for use within one year of appropriation
- The funds will be disbursed on a per project basis
- The Bicycle Development Fund Committee reviews proposals and makes recommendation to the board how to divide any available grant money among applicants

Risk Management

- Activity Leaders shall develop safety policies for their activities. The Board shall review and approve these policies
- All leaders will be trained in first aid to the degree appropriate to the activity or have someone on the trip that is trained.
- In addition, all leaders are encouraged to maintain current certification in the Red Cross' "Adult Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation". All leaders, but especially leaders of trips to locations where professional medical help is not readily available, should consider taking "Advanced First Aid". Boating leaders are also encouraged to take "Advanced Lifesaving". Rescue courses designed for specific activities are also recommended.
- Activity leaders should periodically encourage their leaders to attend first aid and rescue courses. The Executive Board should consider first aid and rescue skills when approving extended trip leaders.
- All first aid classes will be minimally priced to cover their costs, including office overhead and insurance.
- Individuals who are willing to organize or instruct "Standard First Aid" and "CPR" courses for Columbus Outdoor Pursuits shall have all course fees, necessary to obtain instructor certification, paid by COP.

- The cost of rescue or other courses specific to a particular activity should be charged to that activity; appropriate amounts should be budgeted by the activity leaders.
- When an incident occurs that results, or in the estimate of the leader could have resulted, in injury requiring first aid treatment as defined by the American Red Cross, a "COP Incident Report form" shall be completed by the Trip Leader or their designate. The "COP Incident Report" and supporting documents, including the "Trip Report," will then be sent to the appropriate Activity Chair and the Risk Manager in a timely manner. The Risk Manager will send the information to the insurance company.
- Any person with knowledge of an incident may at any time, request an internal Review. The Review team will consist of at least the Risk Management Coordinator the Event Coordinator, and the Chair of the Activity in which the incident occurred. Others may be added to this team at the discretion of the Risk Manager. The Risk Manager will report results to the Board.
- Leaders must be 18 or over, based on legal advice

Goals of Risk Management

The main objective of the Risk Management Program is to protect our members.

1. Utilize preplanning to avoid injury
2. Use releases (waivers) as mitigating tools
3. Use meaningful accident (or occurrences) reports
4. Have pertinent guidelines to use in the field

Trips

- A "Standard Trip" shall be defined as one lasting four nights or less.
- An "Extended Trip" shall be defined as one lasting more than four nights.
- Leaders of Extended Trips shall be approved by the Board by majority vote.
- The schedule of Standard and Extended Trips as well as the leaders of Standard Trips shall be approved by the Activity Leader.
- The Activity Leader shall develop safety policies for their activity. The Board shall review and approve these policies.

Trip Leaders

- The role of the trip leader, in part, is to carry out the safety policies as approved by the Executive Board, consistent with circumstances, and safeguard Columbus Outdoor Pursuits-owned equipment.
- Trip reports should be returned to the office and funds deposited within one month of the end of the trip.

Mass Events are characterized by activity. For boating, more than about fifty (50) people involved. For bicycling, the break may be at about 500 people. Mass Events are usually advertised out of our newsletter.

The Board shall set fees and policies for Special Events. Fees for special events should reflect a price differential favoring COP members.

Training

A course for trip leaders shall be held each year. New trip leaders who will be leading overnight trips must attend this course unless exempted by the appropriate activity leader. Leaders of extended trips must attend this course unless exempted by the Board.

Equipment usage and priority

- COP trips have first choice on the use of equipment owned COP. To exercise this right of use, the person borrowing the equipment must notify the person responsible for the equipment at least one week before the needed date. If the request is within one-week cutoff, the COP trip loses its first priority.
- When two COP events or activities need the same equipment at the same time, the first person making the reservation has right of use.
- Others requesting use of Columbus Outdoor Pursuits owned equipment must make reservation with the responsible individual a reasonable time in advance. The order of priority is first choice COP members for organizations, second choice to COP-type organizations, third choice to other organizations, and fourth choice to individual COP members.
- COP equipment can never be used in a profit-making scheme by an individual or organization.